



# Education Watch

Enhancing Accountability, Local Control, & Parental Choice ■ Leaving No Child Behind

U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee ■ John Boehner, Chairman

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<http://edworkforce.house.gov/edwatch>

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## House Completes Big Week for Special Education

The House this week took an important step toward reform and reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal law providing aid to states and schools for disabled students. On March 19th, House Republicans passed a budget blueprint for FY 2003 that provides a \$1 billion increase for IDEA (a 13.3% increase over FY 2002) and calls for full-funding within 10 years. The increase, requested by President Bush, would provide the highest level of federal support ever provided for children with disabilities.

The House action showed the twin challenges of war and economic recovery haven't deterred Congress or President Bush from addressing issues critical to American students and teachers, and continues a long tradition of Republicans taking the lead in supporting special education.

Since the GOP took control of the House in 1995, Republicans have more than doubled funding for IDEA, increasing it by 226 percent. Funding for the Part B grants to states program, the largest part of IDEA, increased from \$2.3 billion in FY 1995 to \$6.3 billion for FY 2001 and \$7.5 billion in FY 2002. (During the last six years of Democrat control, IDEA funding increased incrementally from \$1.5 billion to \$2.3 billion over *six years*.)

In conjunction with full-funding within 10 years, Republicans plan to pursue much-needed reforms to reduce red tape for schools and address mis-identification problems that disproportionately affect minority students. The House Education committee next month is expected to embark on an aggressive schedule of IDEA hearings to lay the groundwork for legislative action this summer.

### News Summary

**We must help children with disabilities meet the same high academic standards as other children and ensure that no child is left behind.**

- ❑ *House Republicans this week passed an FY 2003 budget blueprint that provides a 13.3 percent increase for special education, the highest level of federal support ever provided for children with disabilities.*
- ❑ *House Democrats opposed the GOP budget, but didn't offer a budget plan of their own.*
- ❑ *IDEA should be fully-funded within 10 years, in conjunction with fundamental reforms to reduce red tape and ensure that special-needs children are not left behind.*

### DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- The Republican budget, which calls for an increase of \$1 billion or 13.3 percent over the FY 2002 level, would provide an estimated \$1,300 for each child with a disability -- the highest level of federal support ever provided for children with disabilities.
- Under Republican leadership, funding for IDEA Special Education Grants to States more than tripled from fiscal years 1996-2002.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

*"This budget provides a \$1 billion increase for special education, putting us on track for full-funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act within 10 years. It also paves the way for us to make long-overdue changes to IDEA to ensure that children with special needs are not left behind."* -- House Education Committee chairman John Boehner (R-OH)